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CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method for making mini-pasta, comprising:
sifting flour;
mixing water with said flour to form mini-pasta granules;
steam-cooking said mini-pasta granules under pressure to form mini-pasta; and
drying said mini-pasta.
2. The method according to claim 1 wherein said drying comprises:
pre-drying said mini-pasta to remove vapors from said mini-pasta; and
fully drying said mini-pasta.
3. The method according to claim 1 wherein said sifting comprises sifting with a single-mesh centrifugal sieve.
4. The method according to claim 1 wherein said steam-cooking comprises steam-cooking said mini-pasta granules on a cooking conveyor that passes through pressurized steam.
5. The method according to claim 1 wherein said sifting comprises sifting generally with a No. 40 sieve as defined in accordance with the ASTM (American Standard of Testing Materials) E-II specification for testing fine and coarse sieves.
6. The method according to claim 1 wherein said mixing comprises mixing said flour and water in a mixer with a water flow rate of generally 250 liters per hour.
7. The method according to claim 1 wherein said steam-cooking comprises steam-cooking said mini-pasta granules with a working pressure of generally 3.7 bars and a steam flow rate of generally 500 kg/hour.
8. The method according to claim 2 wherein said pre-drying comprises pre-drying in an oven generally at 100°C for 6 minutes.
9. The method according to claim 2 wherein said fully drying comprises fully drying said mini-pasta in an oven generally at 110°C for 25 minutes.
10. The method according to claim 1 and further comprising sorting said mini-pasta into different sizes after fully drying.
11. The method according to claim 1 wherein said mixing comprises mixing water with said flour to form maftul granules.
12. An instant mini-pasta comprising mini-pasta made by:
sifting flour;
mixing water with said flour to form mini-pasta granules;

steam-cooking said mini-pasta granules under pressure to form mini-pasta; and
drying said mini-pasta.

13. The instant mini-pasta according to claim 12 wherein said mini-pasta comprises
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